

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 106185

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ORIGIN NEA-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-02 /005 R

66610

DRAFTED BY: NEA/INS:DWBORN:DAV

APPROVED BY: NEA/INS:DKUX

EUR/WE:MJHABIB

----- 115894

R 212102Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T STATE 106185

FOLLOWING REPEAT PARIS 12216 ACTION SECSTATE INFO TEHRAN
HONG KONG TOKYO CANBERRA CAPE TOWN BRASILIA TEL AVIV
OTTAWA ROME LONDON BONN BUENOS AIRES MOSCOW TAIPEI
PEKING GENEVA 20 MAY

QUOTE

S E C R E T PARIS 12216

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING

REF: STATE 104647

1. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS POSED IN
REFTEL: (A) FRANCE, PREOCCUPIED WITH ITS OWN PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION, HAS NOT YET REACTED OFFICIALLY TO INDIAN
NUCLEAR TEST. WHILE WE DOUBT THAT FRENCH WELCOME
ACCESSION OF INDIANS TO NUCLEAR CLUB, GOF WILL FIND IT
DIFFICULT TO CONDEMN TEST IN LIGHT OF FRANCE'S NUCLEAR
TESTING PROGRAM AND ITS DECISION NOT TO ADHERE TO NPT.

(B) WE DOUBT THAT GOF WILL UNDERTAKE ANY
MEASURES AS SIGN OF DISPLEASURE OVER INDIAN TEST. TEST
IS UNLIKELY, FOR EXAMPLE, TO PERSUADE FRENCH TO DIMINISH

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 106185

ITS SIZEABLE PROGRAM OF NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH INDIA.

(C) INDIAN TEST IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON FRANCE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NPT OR OTHER DISARMAMENT ISSUES.

(D) US STANCE VIS-A-VIS INDIA WILL NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT ON FRANCE'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS.

2. GENERAL COMMENT: FRENCH ARE LIKELY TO VIEW INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING LARGELY AS A REGIONAL PROBLEM CONFINED TO AN AREA WHERE FRANCE'S NATIONAL INTEREST IS NOT PARAMOUNT. TREATMENT OF INDIAN TEST SO FAR IN FRENCH PRESS (LE MONDE, LE FIGARO) EMPHASIZES THAT MAJOR DANGER TO INDIA'S SECURITY NO LONGER COMES FROM CHINA OR PAKISTAN BUT RATHER FROM THE MILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN BY "THE SUPER POWERS." GIVEN FACT THAT GOF WILL PROBABLY UNDERTAKE SERIES OF NUCLEAR TESTS IN SOUTH PACIFIC DURING SUMMER OF 1974, FRENCH (FROM TACTICAL POINT OF VIEW) MAY PRIVATELY WELCOME INDIAN TEST IN HOPE THAT IT WILL DEFLECT OPPOSITION BY COUNTRIES IN THAT AREA (AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND) TO FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING. FRENCH PROBABLY RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT FACT THAT INDIAN TEST WAS UNDERGROUND, AND AT LEAST SOME OF FRENCH TESTS THIS SUMMER ARE LIKELY TO BE IN ATMOSPHERE, WILL SEVERELY LIMIT VALUE OF INDIAN TESTING EXAMPLE IN TEMPERING CONDEMNATIONS OF FRENCH TESTS.
IRWIN UNQUOTE RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NUCLEAR TESTS, PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE106185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/INS:DWBORN:DAV
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740127-0460
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740529/aaaaazsg.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 104647
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2002 by garlanwa>; APPROVED <26 JUL 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING
TAGS: TECH, IN, FR
To: NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005